GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2763
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2017
Foreign Jobs for Indians
Galla Shri Jayadev

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign jobs for Indians have come down this year when compared to last year in Saudi Arabia, USA, UK, Australia, Singapore etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any statistics are maintained by the Government in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof during the last five years, country and year-wise; and

(e) the manner in which the Government is planning to address this serious problem?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) to (e) The exact numbers of foreign jobs for Indians in foreign countries is not available with the Ministry as many countries do not have policy to share these data with Indian Missions abroad. Indian Mission in the UAE has reported that such information is not shared by the local UAE authorities and hence it cannot be confirmed whether foreign jobs for Indians have come down in the UAE or not. However, the Government maintains the data in respect of Emigration Check Required (ECR) passport holders, travelling legally to any of the 18 ECR countries for overseas employment. The number of such Indian workers emigrating to the UAE over the last 3 years is as follows: 2,24,037 (2014), 2,25,512 (2015) and 1,63,731 (2016). According to the limited information received from Saudi sources, Indian Mission in Saudi Arabia conveyed that there were about 25 lakh Indian workers in Saudi Arabia in 2016.Indian Mission in Bahrain has reported that the number of Indian expatriate workforce in Bahrain, including dependants, has been increasing and the number has grown from 2,53,907 in 2013 to 3,18,731 in 2017, up to July. Indian Mission in Oman has reported that there has been no significant change in the number of Indian workers in Oman despite economic slowdown due to low oil prices. While the number of Indian workers in Oman stood at 5,99,473 in December 2013, it increased to 6,69,882 in December 2015 and stood at 6,89,600 in December 2016.

In the United States, in April 2017, President Trump issued an Executive Order titled "Buy American and Hire American" which states that in order to create higher wages and employment rates for workers in the US, and to protect their economic interests, it shall be the policy of the executive branch to rigorously enforce and administer laws governing entry into the United States of workers abroad. The UK Government introduced certain changes to its work visa regime in November 2016 and April 2017, like increasing the salary thresholds and levy of Immigration Health Surcharge and Immigration Skills Charge. In April, 2017, Australia announced phased abolition of 457 visa category for skilled worker, to be replaced with the 'Temporary Skills Shortage Visas' programme starting March 2018, providing for a short-term visa for up to two years and medium term visas of up to four years depending on the occupation. As the number of professions in the eligible Occupation List is curtailed, it will impact the number of jobs available under 'Temporary Skills Shortage Visas' programme. These changes/proposed changes are not India specific and their impact will be assessed in due course.